



The Classical Bulletin

Published monthly except July, August, and September, by Loyola University Press, 3441 North Ashland Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.
Rev. James A. Kleist, S. J., Editor. Subscription price: One Dollar a Year.

Entered as second class matter December 14, 1927, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Vol. VI

FEBRUARY, 1930

No. 5

The Sixth Book of the Aeneid

AN APPRECIATION

(Continued from the January number)

III

Virgil understood, if any Roman writer did, the magic of words; and, hence, the individual beauties of his work lie quite as often in the diction as in the thought. This fact makes the reproduction of those beauties by means of translation an almost impossible task. However, if the larger artistic problems involved in the sixth book of the Aeneid are difficult to bring home to high-school and college students, an appreciation of many beauties of detail can easily be conveyed to them by an enthusiastic teacher. Such an appreciation, at least, every reader ought to reap from his study of Virgil; and if he reaps thus much, he will be well repaid for his labor, for it will mean for him an enrichment of his cultural life.

Amongst these individual beauties of the sixth book, let me first of all single out a few of the fine descriptive passages in which it abounds. There is, for example, the scene of Aeneas' departure from the Sibyl's cave, pen- sive and sad and full of Virgilian "ethos":

"Aeneas maestro defixus lumina vultu
Ingreditur, linquens antrum, caecosque volutat
Eventus animo secum" (156-8).

Contrast with this the bustling scene of preparation for the funeral rites of Misenus, with its splendid rhythm and striking onomatopoeia:

"Itur in antiquam silvam, stabula alta ferarum" (179 ff.).

"Forth they fare into the ancient forest, the lofty steading of wild beasts."

"Procumbunt piceae"—"Down crash the pines."

We seem almost to feel the earth tremble as the heavy trunks are felled.

"Sonat ieta securibus ilex,
Fraxineaeque trabes cuneis et fissile robur
Scinditur."

What reader that has ever felt the woodman's thrills, but is vividly reminded of the sharp report of the axe-blade, as stroke on stroke it eats its way into the heart of the oak; of the groaning of the giant of the forest, as he quivers just before the fall; of the tearing of the sinews and the crashing of the limbs as they crumble into a heap upon the ground; and, finally, of the swish-

ing and the crackling of the wood, as the wedges cleave the fallen trunk asunder?

Next turn to the quiet beauty of the scene in which the poet describes the first appearance of the two doves of Venus, who come to guide Aeneas to the covert where the golden bough lies hid:

"Vix ea fatus erat, geminae cum forte columbae
Ipsa sub ora viri caelo venere volantes" (190-1).

The movement of the last verse, especially of the hemistich "*caelo venere volantes*," tripping, liquid, alliterative, is superb. Note too the rapidity and smoothness of the verse which describes the doves' flight:

"Tollunt se celeres, liquidumque per aera lapsae" (202),

and the decrescendo of

"Sedibus optatis gemina super arbore sidunt" (203),

as they alight upon the ilex, where the golden bough gleams amid the dark foliage, like the yellow mistletoe in winter.

Upon this follows another exquisite piece of description, the solemn scene of the last rites of Misenus: the heaping high of the funeral pyre, the kindling of the wood with a torch held by his companions with averted faces—"triste ministerium"—, the extinguishing of the glowing embers with wine, the priestly purification of the attendants with lustral water, sprinkled with a bough of fruitful olive, and the last, sad farewell—"dixitque novissima verba" (212-31).

Later in the book we have a description of the weird sacrifice offered by Aeneas and the Sibyl to Heate and the gods of the infernal regions. Four black bullocks are made ready, a lamb of sable fleece, and a barren cow for Proserpine.

"Tum Stygio regi nocturnas inchoat aras" (252).

And lo! the earth begins to tremble beneath their feet, and the trees to stir and rustle on the mountain tops, and Aeneas seems to hear the hounds of Pluto howling in the gloom:

"Ecce autem primi sub lumina solis et ortus
Sub pedibus mugire solum et juga coepta moveri
Silvarum, visaeque canes ululare per umbram,
Adventante dea" (255-8).

And as the deity draws nigh, the Sibyl cries aloud:

"Procul, o, procul este, profani! . . .
Nunc animis opus, Aenea, nunc pectore firmo" (258, 261).

And with these words she plunges into the cavern—"furens antro se immisit aperto" (262)—and our hero boldly follows after.

The preternatural atmosphere which the poet has created for this scene is magnificent. The tension is heightened by the solemn music of that impressive invocation which follows:

"Di, quibus imperium est animarum, umbraeque silentes,
Et Chaos, et Phlegethon, loca nocte tacentia late,
Sit mihi fas audita loqui, sit numine vestro
Pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas" (264-7).

"Ye gods, whose empire is of souls, ye silent shades, and thou, Chaos, and Phlegethon, the wide, dumb realm of night, be it no sacrilege for me to utter the things which I have heard; be it permitted me, by your divine leave, to disclose things hidden deep in earth and darkness."

The invocation is reminiscent of one of those solemn choral interludes in the form of a prayer, sometimes introduced before the tragic climax in Greek drama.

And now listen to the unrivalled witchery of the simple words in which the poet describes the descent itself:

"Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram,
Perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna,
Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna
Est iter in silvis, ubi caelum condidit umbra
Juppiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem" (268-72).

Such lines as these defy translation. Their combination of simplicity and suggestiveness, of mood, rhythm, and music, is the achievement of genius, and cannot be reproduced in an alien tongue.

There are other descriptive passages in the sixth book which deserve special comment, but I must confine myself to just one more. It is the scene in the fields of mourning—"lugentes campi"—where lovelorn spirits wander about in cheerless solitude. From this sombre background the poet detaches one striking figure full of pathos, Sidonian Dido,—"*errabat silva in magna*." Aeneas recognizes her with difficulty in the enveloping gloom, like a man who desecures, or thinks he has desecured, in a cloudy sky the silvery circle of the new moon:

"Obscuram, qualem primo qui surgere mense
Aut videt aut vidisse putat per nubila lunam" (453-4).

He turns to her, he speaks, he pleads: but even to his most passionate appeals the Carthaginian queen remains insensible:

"Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat" (469).

A beautiful picture, borrowed from Homer, it is true, but much enhanced by the simile which Virgil adds to it:

"Nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur
Quam si dura silex aut steterit Marpesia cautes" (470-1);

where the marble cliff, with its suggested whiteness, seems especially appropriate to describe the pale, immovable countenance of Dido.

We have already seen that Virgil is a master at creating atmosphere, especially weird, preternatural atmosphere. Often he effects this by a solemn, lofty tone in invocations or in forms of address. This method we observe particularly in the Sibyl's brief, rhetorical utterances to Aeneas; as when she recalls him from the contemplation of the sculptured scenes on the temple doors with the words:

"Non hoc ista sibi tempus spectacula poscit" (37);

or when she warns him that the moment has arrived to consult the oracle:

"Poscere fata
Tempus, ait; deus! ecce, deus!" (45-6).

And this laconic but emotional utterance is followed by another perfect piece of description, full of atmosphere:

"Cui talia fanti
Ante fores subito non vultus, non color unus,
Non cometae mansere comae; sed pectus anhelum
Et rabie fera corda tument, majorque videri
Nec mortale sonans, adflata est numine quando
Jam propiore dei" (47-51).

"And before the portals, suddenly, nor countenance nor color nor ranged tresses stayed the same; but her bosom heaves, and her wild heart swells in frenzy; she appears to expand in size, and her voice to sound unearthly, now that she is breathed upon by the nearing deity."

And when Aeneas hesitates, she exclaims:

"Cessas in vota precesque,
Tros, ait, Aenea? Cessas?" (51-2).

"A laggard still at vows and prayers, Trojan Aeneas, a laggard still!"

And with the inspiration of the god upon her, she pours forth through the hundred mouths of the cave her prophecy:

"O tandem magnis pelagi defuncte periculis . . .
in regna Lavini
Dardanidae venient—mitte hanc de pectore curam—
Sed non et venisse volent" (83-6).

"The sons of Dardanus will come indeed into the promised land—Fear not!—but not so as also to have joy of their coming."

And then the grim atmosphere is deepened by her awful vision:

"Bella, horrida bella,
Et Thybrim multo spumantem sanguine cerno" (86-7).

But Aeneas implores her to open for him the gates that lead to his father in Hades; and she most impressively replies:

"Sate sanguine divum,
Tros Anchisiade, facilis descensus Averno;
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis:
Sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est" (125-9).

This may be rhetoric, as some critics have pointed out, and it may not be altogether pertinent and logical; but it is magnificent rhetoric—it is poetry; and it suits the character of the Sibyl perfectly. Impressive, too, are her words to Palinurus, when the latter begs to be allowed to cross the Styx unseparated:

“Unde haec, o Palinure, tibi tam dira cupido?
Desine fata deum flecti sperare precando” (373, 376).

In fact, the whole character of the Cumaean Sibyl as portrayed by Virgil contributes a great deal to the unearthly atmosphere of the sixth book.

Our poet charges with emotion almost everything he touches. Thus Aeneas, as he stands in the trackless forest, is represented as beginning to long for the golden bough. Again, when, “*paribus gressis*” he has plunged with the Sibyl into the mouth of hell and beholds all those terrible forms rising round about him, Virgil makes him instinctively unsheathe his sword; not as if it could be of any use to him against that ghostly array, but just to muster up his courage in those strange surroundings—a fine psychological touch!

Often apostrophe is resorted to by the poet in order to tinge a passage with emotion; as when Anchises, after pointing out to his son the soul of the young Marcellus, exclaims:

“Nimium vobis Romana propago
Visa potens, superi, propria haec si dona fuissent” (870-1).

“All too powerful, O ye gods above, would the progeny of Rome appear to you, had this gift (the young Marcellus) been made her very own;”

or when describing the grief of all Rome at the funeral of the youthful nephew of Augustus, he addresses Father Tiber with the words:

“Vel quae, Tiberine, videbis
Funera, cum tumulum praeterlabere recentem!” (873-4).

“Ah, what a funeral cortège wilt thou behold, O Father Tiber, when thou shalt flow beside his new made sepulchre!”

Or, again, when describing the historic panels sculptured by Daedalus on the doors of Apollo's temple at Cumae, the poet breaks forth into the pathetic lines with their broken rhythm:

“Tu quoque magnam
Partem opere in tanto, sineret dolor, Icare, haberes:
Bis conatus erat casus effingere in auro;
Bis patriae cecidere manus” (30-3).

In point of style and diction, we have already, in our previous paper, noticed the Lucretian splendor of the passage setting forth the divine origin and destiny of the soul. We should also note the Hellenic grace, joined with Roman *gravitas*, in that beautiful characterization of the Greek and Roman genius, upon which we have likewise already commented:

“Exeudent alii spirantia mollius aera . . .
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento —
Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos” (847, 851, 853).

The last verses of this passage contain, as it were, the very essence of that “antique Latin tongue,” which, in Father J. J. Daly's charming phrase, “like a loud-booming bell shaking its tower of granite blocks, shook the whole earth,” and “over all seas flung triremes of war, and bade grim legions scour the world's far verges.”

The sixth book has several very beautiful comparisons. Let me advert in passing to the one in which the Sibyl, like a restive steed, is portrayed as yielding only gradually and perforce to Apollo's overmastering inspiration. It is first introduced in verse 77:

“At Phoebi nondum patiens, immanis in antro
Bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit
Excussisse deum; tanto magis ille fatigat
Os rabidum, fera corda domans, fingitque premendo”
(77-80).

“But not yet brooking Phoebus, the prophetess raves madly in the cave, if perchance she may shake off his strong possession; but he, all the more presses the bit in her frenzied mouth, taming her fierce heart, and so, by pressure, moulds her to his hand.”

The picture is splendidly conceived; the simplicity, boldness, and suggestiveness of the diction are classic; the rhythm with its changes of pace bears out well the idea of the rearing and charging steed trying to unseat its rider. The simile is interrupted by the Sibyl's utterance, but it is resumed and rounded out in verse 100:

“Ea frena furenti
Concutit, et stimulos sub pectore vertit Apollo” (100-1).

“Even thus Apollo shakes the reins over her in her frenzy, and presses the rowels into her inmost soul.”

Some of the other comparisons I have already alluded to; as, for instance, the exquisite

“Quale per incertam lunam sub luce maligna
Est iter in silvis” (270-1);

and the likening of the golden bough, in its alien setting of dark oak leaves, to the fresh yellow mistletoe in winter time; and of pale, unrelenting Dido, in the fields of mourning, to the Marpesian marble cliff.

Another effective comparison of the sixth book is that in which the multitude of shades, thronging eagerly towards the banks of Styx, is likened to the falling leaves in autumn, or to the flocks of migratory birds, driven by winter to warmer climes:

“Quam multa in silvis, autumni frigore primo,
Lapsa cadunt folia, aut ad terram gurgite ab alto
Quam multae glomerantur aves, ubi frigidus annus
Trans pontum fugat, et terris immittit apricis” (309-12).

The Homeric bee-simile of verses 706-9, and that of Cybele, with turreted crown, driving her car triumphantly through the towns of Phrygia (784-7), are other fine examples of developed comparisons.

But frequently the beauty of Virgil and his wonderful appeal lie in single words or phrases—those single words and phrases (to quote in substance a passage from Cardinal Newman), those pathetic half-lines, which

(Continued on page thirty-eight)

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Entered as second class matter December 14, 1927, at the post office at Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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Vol. VI

February, 1930

No. 5

Editorial

It may surprise many of our readers to be told that there are still colleges in the country where the old Jesuit *Ratio* tradition of a single professor for Latin, Greek and English and a curriculum in which Latin forms the *pièce-de-résistance*, is maintained. One of these schools is Fordham University, where Fr. Francis P. Donnelly, S. J., the well known educator, conducts his Sophomore "A" class in the old-fashioned style. We are in receipt of a printed leaflet which shows how in the first semester of the present academic year this class studied "English Speech Style through Latin Speeches, with Comparisons of Demosthenes and Newman." A set of thirty-seven topics, one of which was assigned to each member of the class, is given, constituting a complete oratorical study, by words, sentences and paragraphs, of Cicero's speech on the Manilian Law. We may look back with regret to the days when educational standardization had not yet made such an organized and unified programme impossible for us. All of us feel that something should be done to restore not only co-ordination and coherence, but organic unity to our disorganized college curriculum. If, however, each branch *must* have its separate instructor, if all branches are given more or less the same amount of time and emphasis, and if large liberty of choice is allowed collegians in the selection of subjects of study, whence is the unity of a liberal education to come?

An article in a recent number of the *Classical Journal*, in which an earnest plea is made that something be done

to put back Greek into the public high schools of the land, calls forth a mixture of feelings. First of all, we rejoice at so hopeful a sign of the times. Even the mere desire of high-school Greek is better than the prevalent indifference. Next, we console ourselves with the thought that Jesuit high schools are confronted with a much less serious problem in this matter of Greek than the public schools: *we* should like to see the beginning of Greek pushed back from the third to the second year of high school; *they*, after having practically eliminated Greek entirely, are finding it hard to get it back at all. Finally, we cannot help feeling that there is here a lesson for us to learn. It is wiser to be slow than precipitate in conforming to the educational tendencies of the day. A good thing lost or ejected from the curriculum may be very difficult, or even impossible, to get back.

The *Georgetown College Journal* for December 1929 prints a delightful account of the New York University-Georgetown football game in about one hundred Latin hexameters, with clever and spicy renderings in English verse accompanying them. The lines are full of Vergilian tags, reminiscences and parodies. Here is Captain Mooney's entry:

Primus init bellum Chicagonis asper ab urbe,
Laudator divom Mooney quique agmina ducit—
Agmen agens unus, magnique ipse agminis instar!

Then follow the other warriors in order, amongst them

Ibat Bozekii proles notissima cursu.

The following is especially good:

Ecce Sabinorum prisco de sanguine magnum
Monstrum horrendum, ingens, vastum Sam Cordovano!

With the English rendering:

Lo! what dread monster looms on the sight,
Grim as a thunder-cloud, threat'ning as night;
Torso like Hercules, legs like piano!
GREAT ALL-AMERICAN SAM CORDOVANO!!

Space will not permit us to print more of this delicious extravaganza, which is signed by the Freshman class. If college freshmen are able to play with hexameters in such fashion, the palmy days of Latin are by no means past.

Books Received

From Basil Blackwell, 49 Broad Street, Oxford:
Humour in Varro and Other Essays, by Harry E. Wedek. Pp. 112. 6/ net.
From Longmans, Green and Co., New York:
The Greek Fathers, by James Marshall Campbell (*Debt to Greece and Rome Series*, No. 34). Pp. ix and 167. 1929. \$1.75.

No later European literature however splendid, can replace the Greek as a foundation of culture, a standard of taste, and a source of imperishable wonder and delight.—Prof. D. S. Robertson.

A Summer Course at the American Academy in Rome

One who has read Grant Showerman's *Eternal Rome* will have no difficulty in understanding the nature of the work that is done at the Summer School of Classical Studies of the American Academy in Rome. He needs only to be told that *Eternal Rome* and the six weeks of the Summer Session stand to each other in the relation of text book and laboratory work. It is true that Platner's *Topography and Monuments of Ancient Rome* is used as a supplementary text, and private readings from Vergil, Livy, Tacitus, and Suetonius are suggested, but the spirit, scope and outline of the courses are those of *Eternal Rome*. Indeed, the printed program of the Summer Session is almost a transcript of the table of contents of Director Showerman's book.

From this it is at once evident that the course at the Summer School in Rome is not intended for the specialist in archaeology who would, for instance, unravel the tangle of ruins on the Palatine or establish the identity of every marble fragment in the Forum. There is archaeology in the course, to be sure, and plenty of it, but it serves to give the general background prerequisite to a proper study of particular problems rather than direct aid in solving them. Visits are paid to all the important monuments of antiquity in the city, but one could hardly classify as archaeological a visit to the rooms and tomb of Tasso, or a circuit of the Vatican City, both of them on one day's program. Again, were one to expect to have so thorough an acquaintance, at the end of the six weeks, with the contents of Rome's eight or ten museums of antiquities as to be able to identify and critically evaluate every bust in the Capitoline Museum or every sculpture in the Vatican, he too, if there could be such a person, would be doomed to disappointment. During the Summer Session the principal museums and art galleries are given a few hours each, with attention concentrated on their finest treasures, but the Summer Session is not an art school. As with art and archaeology, so with literature and history: the six weeks are devoted, not to any one of these things, but to all. The course is inspirational rather than informational, designed more for the humanistic student of Roman life and literature than for the specialist in any department of things Roman.

By way of illustration, let us look at the activities scheduled for July 24th and see where they lead us. At half past eight in the morning, the thirty-seven members of the 1929 Summer School, who presumably have prepared themselves by a study of Chapter VII in *Eternal Rome* which treats of the day's topic, "The Fall of the Pagan Empire," seat themselves on their camp-stools in the kindly shade of the temple of Antoninus and Faustina just inside the Forum enclosure. As usual, the day's work begins with readings by the Director from Rome's morning paper, "Il Messagero," for day by day the Summer School students are to learn about the Rome of today as well as that of yesterday. The item selected for study may be an account of the Trastevere "Noiantri" celebration of the feast of Our Lady

of Mount Carmel, to show us how the Roman masses of the twentieth century celebrate a religious festival, or it may be final information about "Christus," a series of musical tableaux to be presented in the Coliseum this very evening for the benefit of the war orphans, or any other journalistic bit characteristically Roman. Then, after comment on the program of the following day and the announcement that the morrow's afternoon lecture will be dropped to allow all to see Roman history in the making when Pope Pius XI leaves St. Peter's in the Eucharistic Procession, there follows a summary of the salient points in the story of the fall of the pagan empire. Perhaps a selection from Claudian, Symmachus, or Macrobius is read in translation.

That done, the Director packs his brief-case, the students fold their camp-stools, and we are off to the laboratory. The first problem to tackle is the very temple in the shade of which we have just been sitting. A few moments are given to its history and architecture, a word is said about the peperino walls, cipollino columns, capitals of white marble—all seem anxious to learn about Roman building materials—and we move along the Sacred Way to the Temple of Romulus to be similarly discussed. We now turn off the Sacred Way to the left into the *Forum Pacis* built by Vespasian, little of it accessible now, but all, we are told, to be released in due time from the fifteen or twenty feet of debris that buries it. On the rear wall of the *Templum Sacrae Urbis*, which stands on the southeast corner of the *Forum Pacis*, once was the famous Marble Plan of Rome. We hear the story of its reconstruction from thousands of fragments by Lanciani and resolve to visit the *Palazzo dei Conservatori* to see it. The next building on the Sacred Way is the Basilica of Constantine and Maxentius. We turn in, compare it with St. Peter's for style, with New York's Pennsylvania Station for size, and take notes on the fruits of the cooperative studies of the structure, made by a Fellow in Classics and a Fellow in Architecture of the American Academy. Still farther on the Sacred Way, as we descend the Caelian Hill, are the vast ruins of Hadrian's Temple of Venus and Rome, which elicit brief comment. More attention is given to the Arch of Constantine which has been so thoroughly studied by one of the first students and professors of the American Classical Academy in Rome, Arthur Frothingham. His chief findings are noted down and their validity tested by a closer inspection of the monument itself.

We are now off to the Coliseum across the road for a twenty minute visit and study of its architecture and history. The tremendous amphitheatre is almost empty; no gladiatorial shows are scheduled for today. But tonight the lure of orchestra and song will pack it with thousands of Rome's lovers of music and some at least of the Summer Session students. We hunt for a bit of shade, for it is near noon and warm, and let our imagination people the greatest of arenas with an ancient Roman crowd while the Director reads Calpurnius Siculus's account of the rustic paying his first visit to the games. It has been a fairly long morning already, but

the best and last item on the program is yet to come, a visit to San Clemente two blocks away. At least it will be cool inside Cardinal O'Connell's titular Church. Yes, Brother Thomas Fleming is there and will, if we wait but a few minutes, act as our Cicerone and lecture through one of Rome's most interesting monuments, where early and late pagan, early Christian, medieval, and modern Rome are piled one above the other to form a happy illustrated compendium of the vicissitudes of Eternal Rome. On the lowest level we see the characteristic huge tufa blocks of an early Republican building; on the second, we make our first contact with Mithraism; on the third, we see in the frescoes the beginnings of Christian art and of a changing Latin; on the fourth, in the present basilica, we admire the fine cosmataesque ornamentation of the charming *schola cantorum*. It is dinner time. A return for a more leisurely examination of the Coliseum is suggested for the afternoon. Some will take the hint; others will perhaps prefer to remain indoors to study and arrange their notes, others again may find a shady nook on the Palatine or Janiculum to read a bit of classical literature in Roman surroundings, in pursuance, by the way, of an idea often recommended by the Director.

So it goes day after day, with short morning lecture or readings or both at the rendezvous determined by the period under consideration: it may be in the Forum, on the Palatine, in front of San Sebastiano, on the steps of Ara Coeli, or even amid the hurly-burly of the old *Forum Olitorium*. There follows a tour of the pertinent monuments, the Director commenting in more or less detail as the party moves along, in brave despite of rumbling motor trucks, curious passers-by, and noisy, intrusive children. Thus, in the course of six weeks, one who follows faithfully the program outlined, visits all the important monuments of ancient, medieval, and modern Rome; reads or hears read much classical literature in the surroundings suggested by the passages; sees the best of Roman art of all periods, and vivifies the history of Eternal Rome he studies, by personal contact with the scenes where that history was made.

By special permission of the national or municipal government, the students of the Summer Session were admitted to several archaeological enterprises not yet completed, such as the excavation of the shops of the Forum of Trajan, the isolation and restoration of the Theatre of Marcellus, the latest excavations on the Palatine, and to a near view of the work at Lake Nemi.

Besides these daily visits to Roman monuments, there were delightful Saturday excursions by private street-car or motor-bus to sites of classical interest outside of Rome: to the Alban Mount, the Sabine Farm and the Fons Bandusiae, Tusculum, Tivoli and Hadrian's Villa, as well as a very profitable trip to the Etruscan Tombs at Tarquinia-Corneto with their well preserved wall paintings, not to mention an afternoon drive to the House of Livia at Prima Porta and a two hour tramp out on the Appian Way after a visit to the Catacombs of St. Callistus and St. Sebastian.

What has one to show for six weeks thus spent? If one were to put that question to a Summer Sessioner, he

might, I believe, answer in some such strain as this: "I have learned something of the spirit of Rome, of Eternal Rome. I have followed her career from her birth to her death many times over, only to see her rise each time to new life. With the early shepherd folk I have gazed down from the safe heights of the Alban Mount across the plain upon the distant Seven Hills; with the pioneers I have stood on the wooded Palatine and watched their settlement grow into the Septimontium and the City of the Four Regions. In the Forum below I have rubbed elbows with kings, senators, and slaves; heard golden eloquence stream from the lips of Cicero in the Senate House and on the Rostrum; laughed with the crowd at Horace's embarrassment in the clutches of the bore on the Sacred Way; seen medieval cattle grazing in its deserted area. I have followed pagan corpses to their last resting places beneath the cypresses on the Appian Way, accompanied the Christians that carried St. Cecilia to her underground burial chamber, strolled through the modern Campo Santo beyond the Porta S. Lorenzo, where thousands upon thousands of modern Romans await the death even of Eternal Rome. But why go on?" In short, in the Summer School one learns, or at least has the opportunity to learn, the genius of Eternal Rome and follows its changes with the centuries, through that sympathetic study of her monuments, literature, and life that can be made thoroughly only by one actually present on Roman soil. How much of that spirit he will absorb depends in great part on the fund of imagination and sympathy that he brings to the task.

In keeping with the spirit of the Vergilian Bimillennium, the 1930 program of the Summer School will differ somewhat from that of previous summers. "Caesar, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Livy and the Monuments of Ancient Rome will be the chief subjects . . . with Virgil and Augustan Rome as the nucleus," says the official announcement. But whatever it is, it will be, as it has been in the past, a serious effort to become acquainted with Eternal Rome.

Milford, Ohio.

JULIAN L. MALINE, S. J.

The Sixth Book of the Aeneid

(Continued from page thirty-five)

give utterance, as the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness, yet hope of better things, which is the expression of Nature's children in every time. Who has not felt the charm of a picturesque line like:

"Jam tandem Italiae fugientis prendimus oras" (61):

"Now at long last we catch at the flying skirts of Italy"†

Or the pathos of

"Sed non et venisse volent:"

"But they will not also have joy of their coming"†

Or the true Roman ring of

"Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito" (95)†

or of

"Nunc animis opus, Aenea, nunc pectore firmo" (261)†

Who has not felt the haunting music of "*Facilis descensus Averno*" (126)? or the pregnancy of "*Hoc opus, hic labor est*," much like the Shakespearean "There's the rub"? Who has not been thrilled by the calm sadness of

"Aeneas maestus defixus lumina vultu" (156)†

or of "*Dixitque novissima verba*" (231)† or of

"Ibant obseuri sola sub nocte per umbram" (268)†

Who has not experienced the fascination of Charon's eyes, like those of the Ancient Mariner: "*Stant lumina flamma*" (300)? Who has not been pierced with the longing and the pathos of

"Tendebantque manus ripae ulterioris amore" (314)†

or by the despairing notes of "*En, haec promissa fides est?*" 346? Who has not responded to the solemnity of "*Maria aspera juro*" (351)† or of

"Quod te per caeli jucundum lumen et auras" (363)†

Who has not felt the cruel fatalism of

"Desine fata deum flecti sperare precando" (376)†

Who has not been affected by the pathetic wailing of the babes,

"Quos dulcis vitae exsortes et ab ubere raptos
Abstulit atra dies" (428-9)†

lines which recall Gray's

"But who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned?"

Who has missed the naive Homeric touch in the eager curiosity of the shades to gaze upon Aeneas: "*Nec vidisse semel satis est*" (487)? or the solemn music of the Sibyl's warning:

"Nox ruit, Aenea; nos flendo ducimus horas" (539)†

or the exaltation of the parting words of Deiphobus to the hero:

"I, decus, i, nostrum: melioribus utere fati" (546)†

or the pathos of the half-verses describing the eternal punishment of Theseus:

"Sedet, aeternumque sedebit
Infelix Theseus (617-18)†

But it is impossible to do justice to all the beauties of the sixth book of the Aeneid in one short paper. A whole semester's lectures would be required for that; and even so, we should probably feel, each time we re-read this masterpiece of the "high enchanter," that there were still in store for us new revelations of beauty, to repay further sympathetic study. If each time we teach a book of the Aeneid to a class, we succeed in raising the veil ever so little, and giving a glimpse of the

splendor that lies beyond to a few chosen souls, we have once more done our little part towards justifying the place which Virgil holds in our curriculum. To be introduced to Virgil by a teacher of taste and feeling is for many the beginning of a liberal education.

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FRANCIS A. PREUSS, S. J.

The Impersonal Passive of Intransitive Verbs

An article in the *Classical Bulletin* for June 1927 on "The Passive of Intransitive Verbs in Livy" treats of the impersonal use of passive intransitive verbs and touches on the psychology of the construction. I should like to add a few observations.

Of all Latin constructions, this use of the impersonal intransitive verb in the passive is considered by the English speaking student as one of the strangest, for the simple reason that it is entirely foreign to our idiom. We have no counterpart of it in English. At times we do use impersonal verbs, as in "It is raining;" but we do not use them in the passive. Some perhaps, calling to mind such a sentence as, "It will be found that his assertions are true," will deny that there is no impersonal passive in English.

Let me divide impersonal verbs into two classes, *real impersonals* and *impersonals in form*. I have not seen this terminology used anywhere, but I think it will help in the understanding of my line of reasoning later in this paper. Perhaps, too, it will give us an inkling of the cause of the confusion in the student's mind regarding this construction. In English, just as in Latin, we have real impersonals in the active, as "it is raining," *pluit*, in which the subject is an imaginary and non-existent "it." We also have the impersonal in form, in the active, in which the subject "it" seems at first glance to be imaginary and non-existent, but which in reality refers to something quite definite. For instance, in the sentence "it is hard to study," *studere difficile est*, the word "it" stands for the definite phrase "to study." We also use the impersonal in form, in the passive, as in the sentence, "It will be found that his assertions are true." Here evidently "It" stands for the clause "that his assertions are true," a meaning that is easily brought home by a change to the more natural form "His assertions will be found to be true." But what I wish to stress is that in English the *real* impersonal is never used in the *passive*, whereas this construction is very common in Latin.

The rule for this impersonal construction in the passive is simple: all intransitive verbs (as also transitive verbs used absolutely, i.e. without their object expressed), must in the passive be used impersonally. This means that the verb must be in the third person singular (if a compound tense, neuter gender), and must have an imaginary, non-existent "it" for its subject. This is what seems strange to the student with his knowledge of English. We say, for instance, *amico noceo*, "I am injuring a friend of mine," but in the passive we have to say, *amico a me nocetur*. This, if literally translated into English, would make nonsense, and many teachers rightly hesitate to do such violence to the mother tongue

as to help the student over the difficulty by the barbarous rendering: "It is injured to my friend." Some, however, put it this way to aid the student's memory. In any case, this example will show why the student thinks this an odd construction and why teachers must make him realize that it was just the natural thing for a Roman to say. I shall try to indicate a reason for the use of this construction later.

In a clause in which the verb signifies time prior to that of the main verb, the Latin participle cannot be substituted for an intransitive verb (or for a transitive verb used absolutely); thus in the sentence, "Having come near the city, the soldiers pitched camp," we must use a clause, and say, "Milites, cum ad urbem pervenisent, castra posuerunt." Tell that to a class, and at least some one is likely to ask, "Why must you?" The impersonal use of intransitive verbs is the reason. For, since the clause denotes time prior to that of the main verb, the perfect participle is in order, and the only perfect participle in Latin (excepting deponents, of course) is passive. Now a participle used adverbially, to take the place of a clause, must be used *personally*, i. e. it must agree with some word, either the subject or the object of the main verb, or with a noun in the ablative absolute construction. But since the perfect participle of an intransitive verb (or of a transitive verb without its object expressed) *cannot be turned into the personal passive*, it follows that we cannot substitute a participle for a verb which is used only impersonally in the passive.

A more common construction influenced by this use of intransitive passive verbs is the gerundive expressing obligation. The gerundive is always passive; therefore, when the verb in question is intransitive, we must use the gerundive impersonally. For instance, in the sentence, "The enemy must be pardoned," we say *hostibus parcendum est*, following the analogy of *hostibus parcitur*, "The enemy are pardoned." It may be advantageous in the classroom to stress this impersonal use of the gerundive and of the participle in its connection with the impersonal use of intransitive passive verbs, for this correlation will make for a better understanding of all three uses.

Latin writers seem to have a predilection for the impersonal construction. Even a cursory reading of Caesar, Cicero, Vergil and Livy will bear witness to this assertion. The Romans were fond of using such impersonal phrases as *pugnatum est*, *vivitur*, *perventum est*; they delighted in such expressions as *tantum abest ut . . . ut*, for our English "I was so far from . . ."; *non multum aberat quin interficerer*, for "I almost lost my life;" or *in eo est ut proficiscantur*, for "they are on the point of setting out." Some would have it that this predilection for the passive argues poverty of expression in the Latin language; but, as Fr. Kleist puts it, "Evidently the ultimate reason (for this use of the verb) must lie, not so much in a certain weakness or poverty of Latin, as in the power of such impersonal forms to express certain shades of thought which are not at all, or not so well, expressed in other ways."

Further, it was as natural, we may suppose, for a Roman to use this construction as it would be unnatural for us to do so. Just what thought was in the mind of a Roman when he used such an expression is almost impossible to say. Translations are no explanations, it is true; but we may suggest the following device for translation which will perhaps make this Latin idiom a little more intelligible to us. So when a Roman says *imperatur mihi*, we may evade the awkwardness of a literal translation and say, "an order is given me." *Parcitur mihi* will, on the same principle, become "mercy is shown to me." *Benedicitur mihi* is "a blessing is bestowed on me." *Studetur linguae Latinae* means that "interest is taken in Latin." *Nocetur mihi* is "an injury is inflicted on me." *Confiditur mihi* is "confidence is placed in me." With such renderings to start with, the student will, it may be supposed, lose his dread of that "unintelligible" Latin idiom, and, secondly, find an English rendering that will suit the context and pay due regard to English idiom.

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HENRY W. LINN, S. J.

Rules for Accent in Latin Verbs

A CORRECTION

The rule for verbs of the fourth conjugation as given in the January issue of the *Bulletin* was inadvertently based upon an incomplete list, and therefore has no value. The following restatement of the rule will prove more reliable.

Fourth Conjugation

Verbs of the fourth conjugation have (in the absence of a double consonant or diphthong) a short final stem syllable, except for the following:

1. Seven important verbs, in most of which the quantity of the final syllable can easily be remembered by recalling the corresponding syllables in well-known related adjectives and nouns.

Custodio (*custos*, -*ōdis*), *insanio* (*insānus*), *finio* (*affinis*), *munio* (*moenia*), *punio* (*poena*), *lenio*, *nutrio*. For purposes of accentuation the two deponents *molior* and *metior* may be disregarded.

2. Six verbs which are met with much less frequently:

Lascivio (*lascivus*), *exinanio* (*inānis*) *fastidio*, *mugio*, *sopio*, and *-retio*.

3. Fourteen verbs which are extremely rare and are listed here merely for reference: *Balbutio*, *caecutio*, *effutio*, *frigutio*, *glutio*, *mutio*, *crocio*, *ligurio*, *prurio*, *sagio*, *scaturio*, *sicilio*, *unio*, *vagio*.

H. P. O.

Livy's central theme is the grandeur of Rome. He gives the index to his mental attitude in his preface. It is evident that he took a patriotic pleasure in his work, as a consolation for the death of republican freedom and for the existing conditions which contained so much that was saddening to his heart.—*Westcott*.

To analyse a pleasure is an ungracious task, and its advantageousness is often questionable.—*Frank Rutter*.

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